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## AN ANNOTATED CHECKLIST OF BIRDS FROM LORNA GLEN (MUTAWA): A PROPOSED CONSERVATION PARK ON THE BOUNDARY OF THE MURCHISON AND GASCOYNE REGIONS OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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### SUMMARY

This paper is based on data gathered by me with supplementary sightings by other acknowledged observers during visits to Lorna Glen between 2000 and 2010. A total of 133 species (69 non-passerines and 64 passerines) were recorded during these visits. Mention is made of the diversity of habitat and emphasis given to the importance of the area to waterfowl after seasonal filling of lakes and claypans. Breeding information is given and reference made of several species not previously recorded in the area.

### INTRODUCTION

The proposed Lorna Glen Conservation Park (Mutawa,

chosen by DEC to represent the Aboriginal name of the area – 26°22'S 121°56'E), about 150 km to the north-east of the town of Wiluna occupies an area of about 244,000 hectares and is situated across two biogeographic regions – the Murchison and Gascoyne and therefore contains a fascinating diversity of landform, geology and vegetation. In turn, this also supports rich assemblages of the region's flora and fauna. Low lying areas are dominated by extensive spinifex, red sand plains with scattered Marble Gum (*Eucalyptus gongylocarpa*), as well as samphire flats, claypans and lakebeds. Mulga communities, often rich in ephemeral plant communities, are also represented. Stony rises occur across the landscape and carry their own unique plant

communities rich in *Acacia* and *Eremophila* species. There are also areas of breakaway, evidence of a former plateau landscape (Marbutt *et al.* 1963). Woodlands of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (e.g. along a drainage area flowing from the east past the homestead) and *Casuarina pauper* occur at several locations.

## BACKGROUND

The property was purchased for the purpose of conservation in 2000 by the then Western Australian Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) under the Gascoyne Murchison Strategy. Shortly after take over, the property was destocked and artificial watering points such as windmills were shut down. A long term strategy for the control of feral cats and the re-introduction of native fauna to the area has been implemented. The property is currently managed jointly between the current Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) and its traditional owners the Martu People.

The average annual rainfall is 259.3mm – falling mainly in the summer months from December to April. Since 1939 rainfall, reliant to a large degree on storms, has fluctuated from a high of 706mm in 1973 to a low of 86.4mm in 1976 (Bureau of Meteorology).

Avifauna of the area was first recorded in July 1896 during the

time of the Calvert Scientific Exploring Expedition under the leadership of Lawrence Allen Wells. He recorded Black Cormorants (not since recorded), Shepherd's Companions (Willie Wagtail), cockatoos, Ring-neck Parrots, Mulga Parrots, Magpies, Miners, Butcherbirds, finches, Blue Cranes (White-faced Heron) and crows (*Corvus* sp.). The expedition camped at a pool on a creek-line, which Wells named Lorna Glen after Calvert's daughter, and Lindsay Gordon Lagoon after 'Australia's poet' – Adam Lindsay Gordon, for whom he had much admiration and whose writings were much in vogue at the time.

George Arthur Kearland, Calvert's expedition 'naturalist and representing botany' also recorded Budgerigars (breeding), Pallid Cuckoo, Red-capped Robin, Hooded Robin, White-browed Babbler, White-plumed Honey-eater, Little Button-quail and Bustard as being in the area. Two years earlier, Kearland, a tireless devotee to the advancement of natural history and one of the founders of the RAOU (Birds Australia) had achieved national recognition as a field ornithologist on the Horn Expedition to Central Australia. His name is commemorated in *Lichenostomus keartlandi*, Grey-headed Honey-eater, collected on that expedition.

On the 25th July 1896 (before European settlement in the area), Wells recorded cattle in the vicinity of Lorna Glen, by noting

“fairly recent cattle tracks evidently those of cattle which had strayed from settlements at the head of the Murchison River during the last rains”. A few days later Keartland reported the sighting of a domestic/feral cat (*Felis catus*).

The first lease holder over the area was a colourful character, Arthur Ashwin – born 1850 in Adelaide, South Australia, died 1930 in Western Australia. He was a prospector, who was amongst the first at many of Australia’s great gold rushes – the Palmer Goldfields in North Queensland, the Pilbara, Ashburton and other goldfields in Western Australia. With money Ashwin made from gold, he branched into pastoralism initially acquiring the lease of Wonggomoo Station near Darlot and Yelma Station. He later applied for a lease of unoccupied crown land abutting Yelma Station to the north, on which Lorna Glen and Lindsay Gordon Lagoon are located. On the successful application of this lease, he named it Lorna Glen Station after Lorna Glen, and moved there from Yelma Station. Although his lease (Lorna Glen Station) was taken up in 1923–24, cattle (later leaseholders also ran sheep) from Yelma Station to the south, and Wongawol Station to the east, most likely spread across this unfenced area for years before.

#### OBSERVATIONS AND METHODS

Kevin and Yvonne Coate made a

brief visit to Lorna Glen on 30 May 2000 and recorded 44 species of bird. Members of the Western Australian Naturalists’ Club under the leadership of Kevin Coate, camped at No 10 Well between 15 and 17 August 2000 and carried out a bird survey in that locality and on flooded claypans near No 2 Well recording 65 species. A much broader and more intensive bird survey covering remote areas on Lorna Glen and 24 trapping sites established by Mark Cowan, Principal Rangeland Ecologist for CALM now DEC for the trapping of vertebrate fauna, was carried out by the Coate’s between 12 and 17 March 2003. These trapping sites cover a broad range of habitats that include breakaways, mulga, grassland communities, spinifex, sandplain, samphire flats and eremophila and acacia shrublands. Bird surveys were carried out within a 200 metre radius of each site. Sites 1,2,7,8,9 and 17 carried little vegetation due to recent bushfires. On this visit 81 species were recorded.

Members of a *Landscape Expedition* under the leadership of Mark Cowan, Kevin Kenneally, Daphne Edinger, Ric How and Kevin Coate carried out a far wider ranging biological survey between 5 and 11 September 2003 to determine areas of high biodiversity and conservation value. This included the trapping of vertebrate fauna and the collection of botanical specimens from the 24 trapping sites established by Mark Cowan. With

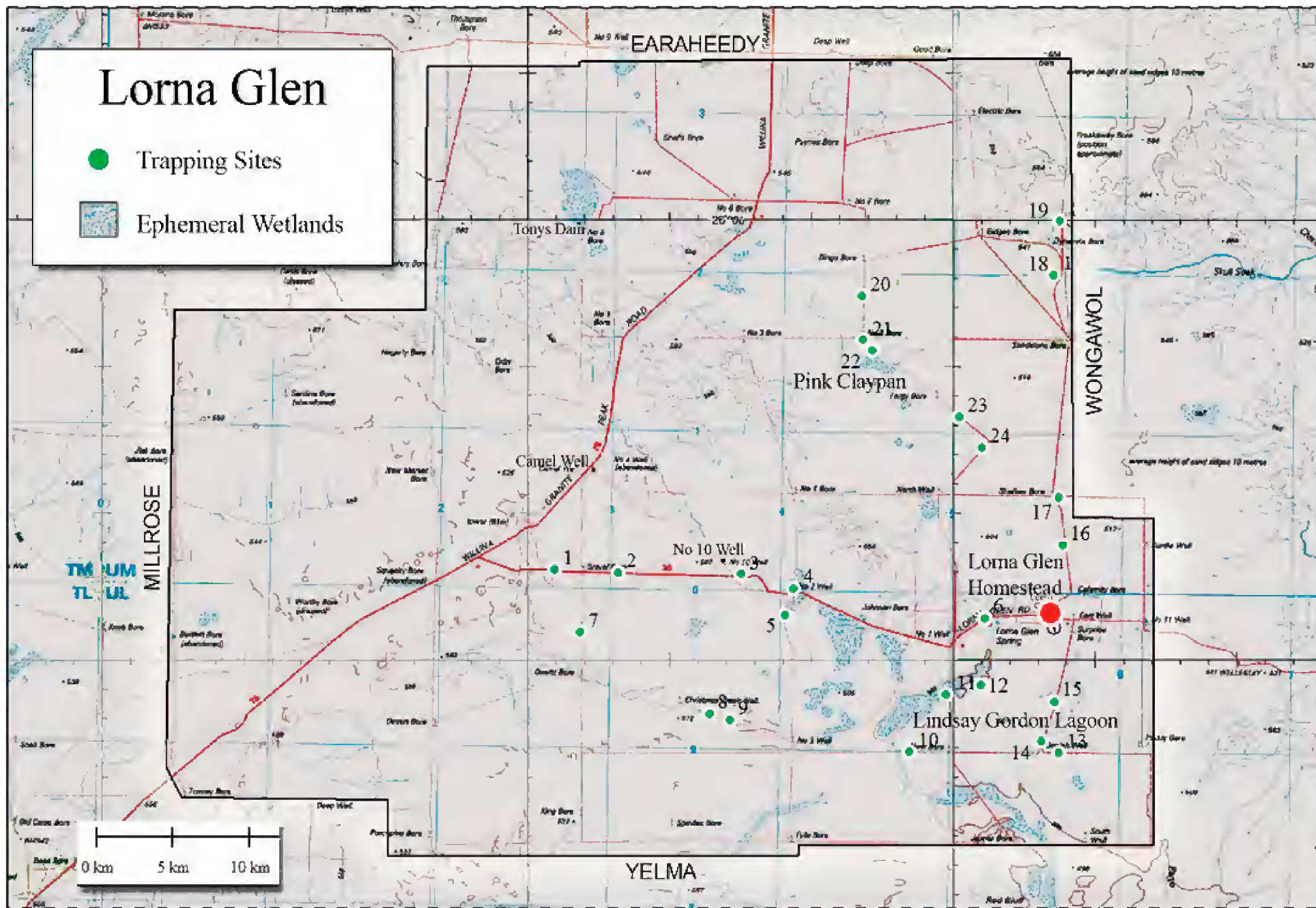


Figure 1 showing location of trapping sites and ephemeral claypans.

the assistance of volunteer birdwatchers, Kevin Coate using the same methods as on the previous visit carried out bird surveys within a 200 metre radius of all 24 trapping sites (see Figure 1). Opportunistic surveys were also done at other locations on Lorna Glen and 84 species were recorded.

A survey at Lorna Glen by members of Birds Australia, Western Australia – lead by John Luyer, was undertaken between 18 and 24 June 2007 at the 24 trapping sites with opportunistic sighting at other locations using similar methods to those above and they recorded 78 species.

Additional bird sightings to those recorded on the above visits are from DEC personnel, especially Mark Cowan (Senior Research Scientist), Neil Hamilton (Senior Technical Officer), Gina Gregory (caretaker at Lorna Glen from November 2002 to October 2003) and Bruce and Kaye Withnell (current caretakers at Lorna Glen).

Nomenclature follows that of Johnstone (2000).

## ANNOTATED BIRD SPECIES LIST

### CASUARIIDAE

Emu *Dromaius novaehollandiae*

Common throughout in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003. Also recorded in 2009.

Breeding: In September 2003 – males with chicks (newly hatched to 3 months were

common). One observed on consecutive days near Shallow Bore caring for 18 chicks (obviously not all its own – 14 were aged about 3 weeks and 4 about 6 weeks). July 2009 – several adults with young.

### MEGAPODIIDAE

Malleefowl *Leipoa ocellata*

Scarce. Two, to the south of Site 5 and toward No 9 Well on 3 June 2003 and one in the same vicinity the following day. Malleefowl tracks identified on cat transect roads down from old shearing shed in September 2008.

### PHASIANIDAE

Stubble Quail *Coturnix pectoralis*

Uncommon. Recorded for the first time in February 2007. Also recorded at Site 9 in June 2007.

Breeding: Adult with at least 3 young near lake system behind homestead in February 2007.

### ANATIDAE

Black Swan *Cygnus atratus*

Moderately common (30–40) on claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Common on Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Breeding: Well advanced cygnets on claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well and the northern end of Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in August 2000. 178 adult and 102 cygnets from small downy to almost fledged at the southern end of Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003. Many disused nests toward the southern end of the lagoon, where the water had

receded from the shallows toward the deeper areas.

Australian Shelduck *Tadorna tadornoides*

Common. On claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well and also a pair at Camel Well and No 10 Well in August 2000. Three at No 5 Bore in March 2003. About 100 at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Breeding: Many newly hatched to almost fully fledged young at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Australian Wood Duck *Chenonetta jubata*

Uncommon. One at No 6 Bore in March 2003.

Grey Teal *Anas gracilis*

Common. On claypans and No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Several at No 5 Bore and about 100 at Pink Claypan in March 2003. At least 40 at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon and 12 at Tonys Dam near No 5 Bore on the northern boundary in September 2003.

Pacific Black Duck *Anas superciliosa*

Moderately common. In small numbers on claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Five at Pink Claypan and one at No 5 Bore in March 2003.

Pink-eared Duck *Malacorhynchus membranaceus*

Uncommon. Ten at Pink Claypan in March 2003. Six at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Hardhead *Aythya australis*

Moderately common. About 80 at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

#### PODICIPEDIDAE

Australasian Grebe *Tachybaptus novaehollandiae*

Moderately common. About 20 in July 2003 and about 40 at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Hoary-headed Grebe *Poliiocephalus poliocephalus*

Common. About 850 bunched up in rafts at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003. Favours inland areas.

#### ARDEIDAE

White-necked Heron *Ardea pacifica*

Moderately common. On claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Between 20–30 at Pink Claypan in March 2003. Scarce: Four at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

White-faced Heron *Ardea novaehollandiae*

Moderately common. On claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Ten at Pink Claypan in March 2003. Thirteen at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Great Egret *Ardea alba*

Uncommon. Three on claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Casual to the area in good seasons.

#### THRESKIORNITHIDAE

Australian White Ibis *Threskiornis molucca*.

Uncommon. Up to 8 on claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Rarely recorded this far inland.

#### ACCIPITRIDAE

Black-shouldered Kite *Elanus caeruleus*

Scarce: One in February 2007 and another near Site 14 in June 2007.

Black-breasted Buzzard *Hamirostra melanosternon*

Moderately common in August 2000 and March 2003. An immature bird at No 2 Bore and a disused nest in *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* about 1km east of homestead in March 2003. Several at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003. A pair in courtship display above Site 10 on 6 September 2003.

Breeding: A nest at Christmas Creek was active in October and December of 2008 and 2009. Carrying sticks near No 2 Well in December 2009. Two nests with young in *E. camaldulensis* east of homestead in December 2009. When examined pellets from beneath these nests were all found to contain feathers of Yellow-throated Miner.

Whistling Kite *Haliastur sphenurus*  
Moderately common. Around claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. One at homestead and several over Pink Claypan in March 2003. Two at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon and at homestead in September 2003. Also recorded in November 2004 and March 2005.

Breeding: A nest near No 1 Well

in August 2000. A pair has nested near the homestead every year since 2003. A nest in a patch of gum trees just before North Well in 2003.

Brown Goshawk *Accipiter fasciatus*  
Moderately common. One at homestead in March 2003. One at Site 4 in September 2003. Also recorded in March 2005, August 2005 and February 2007.

Breeding: No 10 Well in August 2000.

Collared Sparrowhawk *Accipiter cirrocephalus*

Uncommon. One at No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. Also recorded at the homestead area in January and February 2003.

Little Eagle *Aquila morphnoides*

Uncommon. Two at No 2 Well in August 2000. A juvenile near No 9 Well in 2009.

Wedge-tailed Eagle *Aquila audax*

Moderately common throughout in August 2000 and March 2003. Several pairs in September 2003. Also recorded in November 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2009.

Spotted Harrier *Circus assimilis*

Uncommon. One in February 2007 and another in October 2009.

Swamp Harrier *Circus approximans*

Uncommon. One harassing waterfowl at Pink Claypan and another flying north over Site 21 (most likely in transit between Lorna Glen and claypans containing water on Earahedy, where one was recorded by Coate

*et al.* on 15 March 2003) in March 2003. Probably more common in good seasons when lakes and claypans are full of water.

#### FALCONIDAE

Brown Falcon *Falco berigora*  
Moderately common in August 2000. Uncommon: One near Ferguson/Fergie Bore, Dynamite Bore, homestead and Site 5 in March 2003. Moderately common in September 2003. Also recorded in 2005 and 2007.

Australian Kestrel *Falco cenchroides*  
Moderately common in August 2000. One at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon, homestead paddock, airstrip and shearing shed in March 2003. Several in September 2003. Moderately common in March 2005, August 2005, December 2005 and February 2007.

Australian Hobby *Falco longipennis*  
Uncommon. One near No 2 Well in August 2000. Moderately common in September 2003 – one at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon, homestead and shearing shed. One in August 2005.

Breeding: A pair with young in nest in *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* near Site 4 in September 2003.

Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus*  
Uncommon. A single bird at a breakaway area to the north in March 2005 and February 2007.

#### RALLIDAE

Buff-banded Rail *Gallirallus philippensis*  
Scarce. One near the homestead in 2004. A vagrant to the area.

Black-tailed Native-hen *Gallinula ventralis*

Scarce. One at No 6 Bore in March 2003. Nomadic and likely to turn up around flooded claypans in the future.

Eurasian Coot *Fulica atra*

Very Common. An aggregation of over 5000 (3 rafts of approx 2700, 2000 and 300) at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003. They stayed well out into the middle of the lagoon.

#### OTIDIDAE

Australian Bustard *Ardeotis australis*

Moderately common: Several between Camel Well and No 10 Well in August 2000. One between Gidgee Bore and Dingo Bore in March 2003. Several near homestead in May 2003 and June 2003. One between Site 1 and the main road to Granite Peak Station and one between Gidgee and Dynamite Bore in September 2003. Also recorded in March 2005, December 2005 and February 2007.

Breeding: An adult with one small chick at No 10 Well on 30 May 2000.

#### TURNICIDAE

Little Button-quail *Turnix velox*  
Uncommon. One at Camel Well and No 10 Well in August 2000. Common in grassy flats between the homestead and lake in spring 2003 and 2007.

Breeding: Many with small young in August 2003.



## SCOLOPACIDAE

Common Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*

Uncommon. A small flock of 8 sheltering amongst *Halosarcia pruinosa* in the middle of Pink Claypan. More common (up to 45) on claypans to the north on adjoining Earraheedy in March 2003.

## BURHINIDAE

Bush Stone-curlew *Burhinus grallarius*

Uncommon. Heard calling on air-strip near homestead in February 2003 and also in 2004 and 2005. Calling near No 2 Well in February 2010.

## RECURVIROSTRIDAE

Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*

Moderately common. On claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. A flock of 23 on Pink Claypan in March 2003. Also recorded in November 2004 and March 2005.

Banded Stilt *Cladorhynchus leucocephalus*

Scarce. Two on the claypan at 25°54'20"S 121°18'48"E near No 5 Bore on the northern boundary in July 2004.

Red-necked Avocet *Recurvirostra novaehollandiae*

Uncommon. A small flock of 6 on Pink Claypan in March 2003 and one on Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003. Also recorded in July 2004 and November 2004.

## CHARADRIIDAE

Banded Lapwing *Vanellus tricolor*

Uncommon. Two near homestead, air-strip and heard at Site 11 in March 2003. Two at No 6 Bore and Site 5 in September 2003. Also recorded in July 2004 and February 2007.

Breeding: Nesting at the air-strip in July 2003 and the homestead area in August 2003. A pair with 4 newly hatched chicks at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon on 9 September 2003.

Red-capped Plover *Charadrius ruficapillus*

Moderately common. On claypan at No 2 Well in August 2000. Fourteen on Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in March 2003. Common. Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003 (a flock of 30–40 with about 60 single birds scattered amongst *Halosarcia sp.* herbage at southern end). 13 recorded near Site 11 in June 2007. Breeding: At least 20 sitting on nests. Four nests checked, each contained 2 eggs. One female with 2 newly hatched chicks at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

Black-fronted Dotterel *Charadrius melanops*

Moderately common on claypans between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. 8 on claypan between No 4 Well and No 5 Well in May 2003. Also recorded at Site 22 in June 2007.

Breeding: A nest with 3 newly hatched chicks on claypan near No 2 Well in August 2000.

Oriental Plover *Charadrius veredus*  
Rare visitor. One on Pink Claypan  
in September 2008.

Red-kneed Dotterel *Erythrogonys*  
*cinctus*

Uncommon. One sheltering  
amongst *Halosarcia pruinosa* on  
the edge of Pink Claypan in  
March 2003. Moderately common.  
25 on claypans between No 4  
Well and No 5 Well in June 2003.

#### LARIIDAE

Silver Gull *Larus novaehollandiae*  
Uncommon. 3 at Lindsay Gordon  
Lagoon in September 2003. These  
were most likely vagrants from  
south-eastern Australia according  
to the *Handbook of Western*  
*Australian Birds* Vol 1 by Johnstone  
and Storr (page 226).

Gull-billed Tern *Sterna nilotica*  
Uncommon. A flock of about 60  
– many in breeding plumage at  
Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in  
September 2003.

Whiskered Tern *Sterna hybrida*  
Moderately common over flooded  
claypans in August 2000.

#### COLUMBIDAE

Common Bronzewing *Phaps*  
*chalcoptera*  
Moderately common throughout  
in August 2000. 50–60 attracted  
morning and evening to No 6  
Bore in March 2003. 20–30  
coming into water at dusk on  
Lindsay Gordon Lagoon near Site  
12 in September 2003.

Crested Pigeon *Ocyphaps lophotes*  
Moderately common throughout

in August 2000, March 2003 and  
September 2003.

Breeding: In the homestead area  
in August 2003.

Diamond Dove *Geopelia cuneata*  
Common around homestead and  
scarce elsewhere in March 2003.  
Not recorded in September 2003.  
Recorded in homestead area in  
February 2007 and also recorded  
in 2009. Probably more  
widespread in good seasons.

#### PSITTACIDAE

Galah *Cacatua roseicapilla*  
Common throughout in August  
2000, March 2003 and September  
2003.

Breeding: Some in nesting  
hollows at Site 4 in March 2003.  
Young in nests near homestead  
(adults carrying leaves to tree  
hollows), Site 4 and No 10 Well  
in September 2003.

Little Corella *Cacatua sanguinea*  
Scarce: Several in eucalyptus trees  
near homestead in July 2003 and  
November 2004.

Cockatiel *Nymphicus hollandicus*  
Moderately common in small  
flocks in March 2003 and  
September 2003.

Breeding: In *Eucalyptus camaldulenis*  
near homestead in July and  
August 2003.

Princess Parrot *Polytelis alexandrae*  
Uncommon. 4 near Camel Well  
in August/September 2006 and 3  
on 12 August 2007. A nomadic  
parrot which seem to prefer  
desert areas with stands of Marble  
Gum *Eucalyptus gongylocarpa*,  
Desert Oak *Casuarina decaisneana*,

or Mulga *Acacia sp.*. Of recent years their stronghold has varied between the Great Sandy Desert and the Great Victoria Desert.

Australian Ringneck *Platycercus zonarius*

Moderately common in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.

Breeding: Nesting in hollows of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* near homestead in July and August 2003, Site 4, No 10 Well and homestead area (4 nests – 1 with 5 partly fledged young) in September 2003.

Mulga Parrot *Platycercus varius*

Common between Camel Well and No 10 Well in August 2000. Several pair at Dynamite Bore, between Sites 17 and 18, Sandstone Bore, Shallow Bore, Site 23 and near homestead in September 2003.

Breeding: In trees near homestead in July and August 2003.

Elegant Parrot *Neophema elegans*

Scarce. One photographed on homestead lawn in 2007, well north-east of its normal range.

Scarlet-chested Parrot *Neophema splendida*.

Scarce. A pair near homestead in January 2010. Occasionally seen on adjoining Millrose Station.

Bourke's Parrot *Neophema bourkii*

Moderately common. Two at Site 5, 15 at Site 23, about 6 on main road near northern boundary, and 40–50 attracted to No 6 Bore (before dawn and at dusk – 5.30pm until after dark) in March 2003. Six near No 10 Well and 2

near shearing shed in September 2003. Also recorded in August 2005, December 2005 and February 2007. Very common in November 2009, December 2009 and January 2010. Up to 250 attracted to water point at homestead.

Budgerigar *Melopsittacus undulatus*

Common throughout the area in small flocks in March 2003. In flocks up to 30 in burnt area near Sandstone Bore, Site 2 and Site 3, between Calamity Bore and Shallow Bore, and less common elsewhere in September 2003. Recorded in small numbers in March 2005 and February 2007.

Breeding: In large numbers at Site 4 and near the homestead in March 2003 and July and August 2003.

## CUCULIDAE

Pallid Cuckoo *Cuculus pallidus*

Moderately common. One heard calling at No 10 Well in March 2003. Recorded near the homestead in July 2003 and at Site 16 and homestead in September 2003.

Black-eared Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx osculans*

Uncommon. One at Site 5 and one at Dynamite Bore in September 2003. Moderately common in June 2007.

Horsfield's Bronze-Cuckoo *Chrysococcyx basalis*

Moderately common. Several between Camel Well and No 10 Well in August 2000. One at Christmas Creek and one just north of Site 20 in March 2003.

Heard calling at Site 18, Site 6 and Site 1 in September 2003.

#### STRIGIDAE

Boobook Owl *Ninox novaeseelandiae*

Uncommon. One at No 10 Well in August 2000. One flushed from hollow tree and mobbed by 8 Yellow-throated Miners, 2 Pied Butcherbirds, 2 Australian Magpies and 2 Ground Cuckoo-shrikes at Site 8 in March 2003. One pair around homestead on most nights in September 2003 and May 2005.

#### TYTONIDAE

Barn Owl *Tyto alba*

Uncommon. Resident near homestead in March 2003, July 2003 and February 2007. One at No 9 Well in February 2008.

Breeding: Several successful rearing of young in a nesting hollow in a *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* near the homestead between 2003 and 2007. Re-introduced Brush-tailed Possum have taken over the hollow – since 2009.

#### PODARGIDAE

Tawny Frogmouth *Podargus strigoides*

Uncommon. A pair near homestead in June 2003 and most nights in September 2003. Also recorded in December 2005 and February 2007.

#### CAPRIMULGIDAE

Spotted Nightjar *Eurostopodus argus*

Moderately common. Heard

calling at No 10 Well in August 2000. One flushed from ground at Site 13, two flying between pools on Christmas Creek, and one on main road near northern boundary in March 2003.

#### AEGOTHELIDAE

Australian Owlet-nightjar *Aegotheles cristatus*

Moderately common. Several at No 10 Well in August 2000. Heard calling at homestead and one flushed from the hollow of a *Casuarina pauper* tree at Site 6 in March 2003. Also recorded in August 2005 and February 2007.

#### HALCYONIDAE

Red-backed Kingfisher *Todiramphus pyrrhopygia*

Moderately common. One at No 10 Well in August 2000 and one near homestead in January 2003. One at Site 6, Site 7 and between Sandstone Bore and Shallow Bore in September 2003. Also recorded in November 2004 and February 2007.

#### MEROPIDAE

Rainbow Bee-eater *Merops ornatus*  
Several small flocks migrating north over the homestead and at Site 4 in March 2003, March 2005 and February 2007.

#### CLIMACTERIDAE

White-browed Treecreeper *Climacteris affinis*

Uncommon. One near grid about 500 metres east of homestead and another near the junction of the Granite Peak Station road in early

September 2003. Also recorded in December 2005 and June 2007.

#### MALURIDAE

Splendid Fairy-wren *Malurus splendens*

Moderately common. At Site 4, Site 20 and Site 24 in March 2003. Family group at Dynamite Bore, Site 20 and Site 24 in September 2003.

Breeding: Dependent young at Site 13 in June 2007.

Variegated Fairy-wren *Malurus lamberti*

Moderately common. At Site 9 and Dynamite Bore in March 2003 and between Christmas Creek and Lake Paddock in July 2003. Family group at Site 24 in September 2003.

Breeding: July 2003.

White-winged Fairy-wren  
*Malurus leucopterus*

Moderately common. A small family group between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. A small family group on the claypan between Lindsay Gordon Lagoon and Johnson Bore in September 2003.

Rufous-crowned Emu-wren  
*Stipiturus ruficeps*

Scarce. One on southern boundary near Jasper Bore in October 2009 and December 2009.

Striated Grasswren *Amytornis striatus*

Scarce. Two in spinifex up from No 1 Bore in north-west corner in July 2004.

#### PARDALOTIDAE

Red-browed Pardalote *Pardalotus rubricatus*

Scarce. One in June 2007.

Striated Pardalote *Pardalotus striatus*.

Moderately common. Around No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. One seen several times near homestead in March 2003. One at Site 4 in September 2003. Also recorded in August 2005 and June 2007.

#### ACANTHIZIDAE

Redthroat *Pyrrholaemus brunneus*

Uncommon. Two at Site 18 and one at Dynamite Bore in March 2003. One at Site 21 in September 2003. Moderately common in June 2007.

Weebill *Smicrornis brevirostris*

Moderately common in August 2000 and March 2003. Less common in September 2003.

Breeding: Feeding young in July 2003.

Western Gerygone *Gerygone fusca*

Uncommon. One at Site 4 and Site 17 in June 2007.

Broad-tailed Thornbill (Inland Thornbill) *Acanthiza apicalis*

Moderately common to common throughout the area in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.

Slaty-backed Thornbill *Acanthiza robustirostris*

Moderately common in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003. Often in mixed foraging flocks with Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill and Southern White-face.



ABOVE LEFT: Site 2 in March 2003, pit traps being set in recently burnt *E. gongylocarpa* woodland by Mark Cowan

ABOVE: Near Site 22 in March 2003



ABOVE: Near Site 17 in March 2003. Sanddune with *Lomandra leucocephala* and recently burnt mulga



ABOVE: Near Site 4 in March 2003. Ephemeral wetland with scattered *E. camaldulensis*



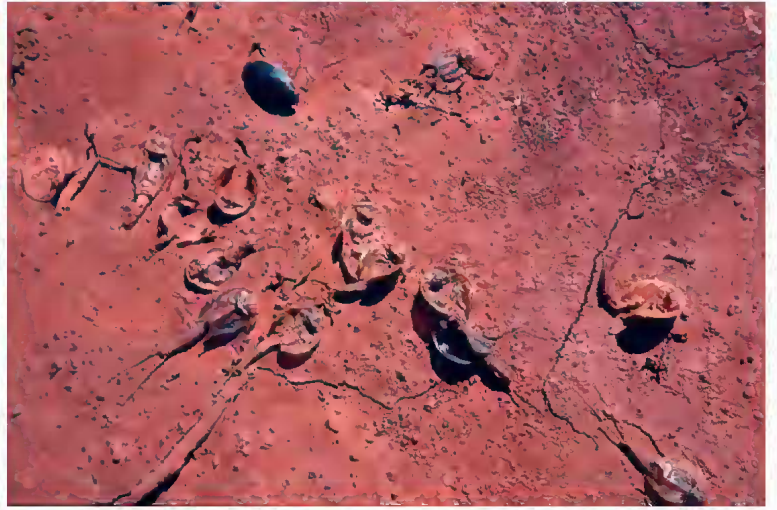
ABOVE: Breakaway near Dynamite Bore

RIGHT: Near Site 4 in March 2003. Wetland of *E. camaldulensis*

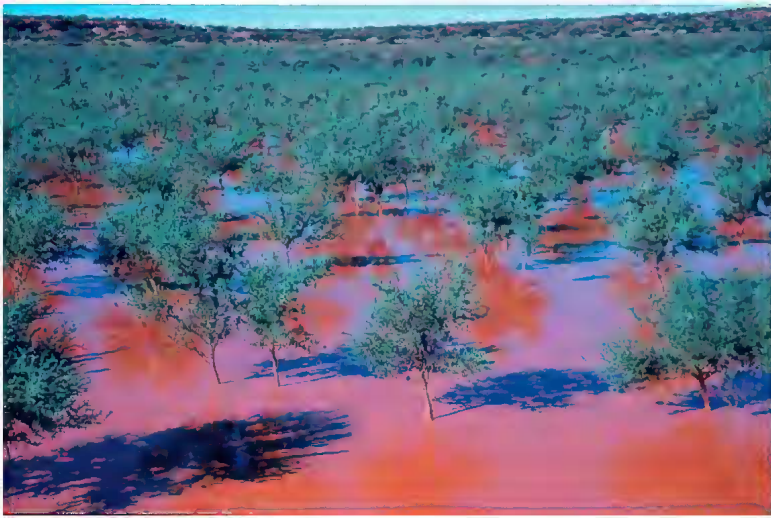




Landscape Expedition volunteers spotting waterfowl at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003



Pink Claypan in March 2003. Dead shield shrimps along receding waterline



Pink Claypan in March 2003. Dense cover of *Halosarcia pruinosa* over the claypan



Pink Claypan in September 2003. All water had disappeared



Landscape Expedition stop in *E. camaldulensis* near Well No 10 in September 2003



Lindsay Gordon Lagoon near Site 11, September 2003. Photo: Kevin Kenneally

Chestnut-rumped Thornbill  
*Acanthiza uropygialis*

Common in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003. Often in mixed foraging flocks with Slaty-backed Thornbill, Yellow-rumped Thornbill and Southern Whiteface.

Breeding: Nest with young in hollow of dead *Acacia aneura* at Site 23 and one carrying food at Site 1 in September 2003.

Yellow-rumped Thornbill  
*Acanthiza chrysorrhoa*

Moderately common. In August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003 (especially near Dynamite Bore) – sometimes in mixed foraging flocks with Chestnut-rumped Thornbill, Slaty-backed Thornbill and Southern Whiteface.

Breeding: Nest containing small young in a clump of mistletoe attached to *Acacia aneura* at Camel Well in August 2000.

Southern Whiteface *Aphelocephala leucopsis*

Common in August 2000 and less common in March 2003. Moderately common, especially near Dynamite Bore in September 2003.

#### MELIPHAGIDAE

Brown Honeyeater *Lichmera indistincta*

Uncommon. Attracted to blossom of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* near homestead in March 2005 and December 2005 and February 2007.

Black Honeyeater *Certhionyx niger*  
Scarce. One male near homestead

in January 2003. Also recorded in December 2005.

Highly nomadic, abundance depends on season.

Pied Honeyeater *Certhionyx variegatus*

Uncommon in March 2003. A flock (approx 65) migrating in a north-easterly direction, just north of New Bore. Apart from 3 females they were all males. Several between Site 1 and main road north to Granite Peak Station in September 2003. Also recorded in February 2007.

Highly nomadic, abundance depends on season.

Singing Honeyeater *Lichenostomus virescens*

Common over much of the area in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.

Grey-headed Honeyeater  
*Lichenostomus keartlandi*

Scarce. One near the homestead in July 2003 (significantly south of its normal range).

Grey-fronted Honeyeater  
*Lichenostomus plumulus*

Moderately common in September 2003. Attracted to areas of *Eucalyptus gongylocarpa* and sand dunes with flowering *Grevillea juncifolia*. In previously burnt Site 2, several were observed flying to the ground and reaching up into low bushes of flowering *Dicrastylis tomentosa*. It was uncertain as to whether they were gathering wool from the felty leaves of the plant for nesting purposes or seeking insects. It is unlikely they would



be seeking nectar. Moderately common in June 2007.

White-plumed Honeyeater  
*Lichenostomus penicillatus*

Common in August 2000 and March 2003. Less common in September 2003, especially at Site 4.

White-fronted Honeyeater  
*Phylidonyris albifrons*

Moderately common in August 2000. Scarce – one at Site 24 in March 2003. Very common in sand dune areas of flowering grevillea and in excess of 20 (including some immature birds) at Site 9 and an area west of the main road to Granite Peak Station at 26°11'31"S 121°11'37"E – less common in other areas in September 2003. Also recorded February 2005 and June 2007.

Yellow-throated Miner *Manorina flavigula*

Common throughout the area.  
Breeding: Near the homestead in August 2003.

Spiny-cheeked Honeyeater  
*Acanthagenys rufogularis*

Moderately common throughout the area in August 2000 and common in March 2003 and September 2003.

Breeding: Dependent young at Site 13 in June 2007.

Red Wattlebird *Anthochaera carunculata*

Uncommon. Two at Site 4 on 6 September 2003 and one at No 10 Well on 11 September 2003 (unusual sightings and well outside of their recorded range – brought to notice when one was

heard and then seen in a stand of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* scolding a Goshawk perched there).

Apart from this record in *The Handbook of Western Australian Birds* (Johnstone and Storr) the nearest other records were about 200 kms south. The closest record in *The New Atlas of Australian Birds* is in the vicinity of Sandstone about 220 kms to the SW.

Orange Chat *Epthianura aurifrons*  
Uncommon. At least 8 (in metre high *Halosarcia pruinosa*) at Pink Claypan in March 2003 and another 6 in September 2003.

Crimson Chat *Epthianura tricolor*  
Common throughout the area in August 2000. Less common – 2 males in full breeding plumage at Site 14 in a mixed species foraging flock, and a small flock (5–6) on northern boundary near Electric Bore in March 2003. Common to very common in most areas particularly at Dynamite Bore, in previously burnt areas at Site 2 and between Shallow Bore and Calamity Bore in September 2003. Also recorded in February 2007.  
Breeding: 3 nests with young at Site 2 on 5 September 2003.

#### PETROICIDAE

Red-capped Robin *Petroica goodenovii*

Moderately common throughout the area in August 2000 and March 2003. Less common in September 2003. Recorded in November 2004, December 2005 and February 2007.

Breeding: A pair feeding young at No 10 Well in August 2000.

Hooded Robin *Petroica cucullata*  
Moderately common at No 10 Well and between No 1 Well and No 2 Well in August 2000. A pair at Site 10 and Site 23 in March 2003. Scarce: One at Site 10 in September 2003. Also recorded in December 2005 and 2009.  
Breeding: With dependent young at Site 10 in June 2007.

#### POMATOSTOMIDAE

Grey-crowned Babbler  
*Pomatostomus temporalis*  
Moderately common throughout the area.

White-browed Babbler  
*Pomatostomus superciliosus*  
Moderately common. A small family group at No 10 Well in August 2000 and at Dynamite Bore in September 2003. Also record in November 2004, August 2005, December 2005 and February 2007.

#### CINCLOSOMATIDAE

Chestnut Quail-thrush  
*Cinclosomta castanotus*  
Uncommon. One near No 1 Well in February 2010.

Chestnut-breasted Quail-thrush  
*Cinclosoma castaneothorax*  
Moderately common over stony areas. One near No 1 Well and one north of Site 15 (26°15'24"S 121°33'54"E) in March 2003 and September 2003.  
Breeding: Adults carrying food between Site 10 and Site 11, near Site 14 and between Site 15 and Surprise Bore in September 2003.

#### NEOSITTIDAE

Varied Sittella *Daphoenositta chrysoptera*  
Uncommon. A small flock (4) at Site 10 in March 2003. Also recorded in December 2005 and 2007.

#### PACHYCEPHALIDAE

Crested Bellbird *Oreoica gutturalis*  
Common throughout in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.  
Breeding: Nest with 2 eggs – 1 metre up in an *Eremophila flaccida* at Site 10 on 6 September 2003.

Rufous Whistler *Pachycephala rufiventris*  
Moderately common over much of the area in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.

Grey Shrike-thrush *Colluricincla harmonica*  
Moderately common in August 2000. Less common in March 2003. Moderately common in September 2003. Also recorded in August 2005 and February 2007.  
Breeding: Near the homestead in July 2003.

#### DICRURIDAE

Willie Wagtail *Rhipidura leucophrys*  
Moderately common in August 2000. Less common in March 2003. Moderately common in September 2003.

Magpie Lark *Grallina cyanoleuca*  
Moderately common in August 2000. Less common in March 2003. Moderately common in September 2003.  
Breeding: Near the homestead in

January 2003. Two nests with 3 young near homestead, one nest with young at Site 4, and one dis-used nest (a pair copulating nearby) at Dynamite Bore in March 2003.

#### CAMPEPHAGIDAE

Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike  
*Coracina novaehollandiae*

Moderately common in August 2000. Scarce: One at Site 4 and several near homestead in March 2003. Moderately common in September 2003, November 2004, December 2005 and February 2007.

Breeding: Near homestead in July 2003.

Ground Cuckoo-shrike *Coracina maxima*

Moderately common. Six at Camel Well and a pair at No 10 Well in August 2000. Scarce. A pair attracted to a mobbing of a Boobook Owl by other birds at Site 8 in March 2003. A pair between Site 24 and Shallow Bore in September 2003. Also recorded in November 2004, August 2005 and December 2005.

White-winged Triller *Lalage tricolor*

Moderately common throughout the area in March 2003. Common on burnt area between Calamity Bore and Shallow Bore and scarce elsewhere in September 2003. Nomadic – abundance depends on season.

#### ARTAMIDAE

Masked Woodswallow *Artamus personatus*

Uncommon. A flock (50–60) in transit, between Site 18 and Dynamite Bore in March 2003. Common in burnt area between Site 18 and Sandstone Bore in September 2003. Not seen elsewhere. Also recorded in August 2005.

Breeding: About 8 nest building in *Hakea suberea* trees at 26°06'48"S 121°33'43"E in September 2003.

Black-faced Woodswallow  
*Artamus cinereus*

Moderately common (in ones and twos) at No 10 Well in August 2000. In mixed foraging flocks at Site 10, Site 14 and Site 23 in March 2003. Common in burnt areas, especially between Calamity Bore and Shallow Bore and moderately common elsewhere in September 2003.

Little Woodswallow *Artamus minor*

Uncommon. Several seen in June 2007.

#### CRACTICIDAE

Grey Butcherbird *Cracticus torquatus*

Moderately common throughout the area in August 2000. Common in March 2003 and September 2003.

Pied Butcherbird *Cracticus nigrogularis*

Common throughout the area in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.

Breeding: Three nests with sitting birds within 100 metres of each other in a grove of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* at No 10 Well on 11 September 2003. Unusual for

these birds to nest so close together.

Australian Magpie *Cracticus tibicen*  
Moderately common in August 2000. Common in March 2003. Less common in September 2003.

#### CORVIDAE

Torresian Crow *Corvus orru*.  
Moderately common in August 2000. Scarce in March 2003 and September 2003.

Little Crow *Corvus bennetti*  
Common in August 2000. Less common in March 2003 and September 2003.

#### PTILONORHYNCHIDAE

Western Bowerbird  
*Ptilonorhynchus guttatus*  
Moderately common in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003. A bower near homestead and one at Site 23.  
Breeding: A nest near the homestead in July 2003.

#### HIRUNDINIDAE

White-backed Swallow  
*Cheramoeca leucosternus*  
Scarce. One flying over claypan near No 5 Bore in March 2003.

Welcome Swallow *Hirundo neoxena*  
Uncommon. Two at the shearing shed and around homestead in February 2007 and 2009. Also recorded at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in June 2007.

Tree Martin *Hirundo nigricans*  
Moderately common in August 2000 and March 2003. Less common in September 2003. Also

recorded in December 2005 and February 2007.

Breeding: Several checking out hollows at No 10 Well in March 2003.

Fairy Martin *Hirundo ariel*  
Scarce. Several over claypan at No 2 Well in August 2000. Not recorded in September 2003. Recorded at Site 22 over Pink Claypan in June 2007.

Breeding: Dis-used nests at Site 19 in September 2003.

#### SYLVIIDAE

Rufous Songlark *Cincloramphus mathewsi*  
Moderately common at claypan near No 2 Well and No 10 Well in August 2000. Recorded at Site 1 and Site 23 in June 2007.

Brown Songlark *Cincloramphus cruralis*.  
Scarce. One in November 2004. Likely to be more common in good seasons.

#### DICAEIDAE

Mistletoebird *Dicaeum hirundinaceum*  
Moderately common in August 2000. Uncommon in March 2003. Common, attracted to mistletoe infesting *Melaleuca interioris* at Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in September 2003.

#### PASSERIDAE

Zebra Finch *Taeniopygia guttata*  
Common throughout the area in August 2000 and March 2003. Less common in September 2003. Many hundreds attracted to water point at homestead in October 2009.

Breeding: Near homestead in July and August 2003 and near Site 14 in June 2007.

Painted Finch *Emblema pictum*  
Uncommon. Recorded on two occasions on the south boundary in 2009. Highly nomadic, depending on season. Although generally attributed to areas to the north in the Pilbara and Kimberley they have also been recorded from the Carnarvon Ranges, Lake Mason and near Menzies and Leonora.

#### MOTACILLIDAE

Australian Pipit *Anthus australis*  
Moderately common at Pink Claypan and Lindsay Gordon Lagoon in August 2000, March 2003 and September 2003.

#### DISCUSSION

The 133 bird species recorded on Lorna Glen can be compared with the 89 species recorded in the Carnarvon Ranges, 120kms to the north-west (Coate 2003) and the 111 species on Wanjarri Station, 180kms to the south-west (Moriarty 1972). The richness of species is no doubt due to the diversity of habitat such as ephemeral lakes, claypans, eucalyptus and mulga woodlands, etc, in an otherwise arid area dominated by spinifex (*Triodia* sp.). In comparing these three areas it needs to be kept in mind that there have been more observers at Lorna Glen.

Sightings of Malleefowl in recent times have been rare although

there is anecdotal suggestion that they were formerly more common (e.g. 2 were seen between Deep Well and Porcupine Bore on the southern boundary of Lorna Glen in about 1982 – *pers comm* Rex Ward, Millrose Station). Although scarce they appear to be far ranging in their distribution and have occasionally been sighted as far north as the Carnarvon Ranges. To date there has been no nest mound found.

In March and September 2003, patchily distributed birds such as White-browed Treecreeper, Varied Sittella, Redthroat and a migratory flock of Pied Honey-eater (almost all male birds), were welcome discoveries. Other species expected to have been recorded were Western Gerygone and Red-browed Pardalote. These were later recorded in June 2007 by Birds Australia Western Australia.

Despite the availability of suitable habitat the only sightings to date of Striated Grasswren have come from the north-west corner of the property and for the Rufous-crowned Emu-wren the southern boundary. Hopefully with destocking and eradication measures aimed at feral animals (cats, etc) sightings will become more frequent.

Red Wattlebird found in *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* woodlands (not in flower) near No 10 Well, extended their known range by about 200 kms. Great Egret, White Ibis, Eurasian Coot, Swamp Harrier, Buff-banded Rail,

Oriental Plover, Elegant Parrot, Scarlet-chested Parrot, Grey-headed Honeyeater and White-backed Swallow were recorded, although they are generally overlooked in the literature as being in the area. Whether casual to the area in good seasons or regular visitors will become apparent with future observations.

At the time of the Western Australian Naturalists Club's visit in August 2000, after above-average rainfall in 1999 (559 mm) and 2000 (441 mm), Lindsay Gordon Lagoon was almost full and there was water in most of the claypans. Unfortunately the main body of water in the lagoon was unable to be accessed due to the soggy nature of the surrounding country and bogging of vehicles.

On the Landscape Expedition in September 2003 a considerable amount of water still remained at the southern end of Lindsay Gordon Lagoon, but this was not discovered until the day before departure. As a consequence the area was inadequately surveyed. If more time had been available considerably more recordings would have resulted. However significant numbers of waterfowl were noted – for example over 5000 Eurasian Coot, more than 800 Hoary-headed Grebe and large numbers of Black Swans with cygnets.

This further establishes Lorna Glen's importance as a resting place and breeding ground for waterfowl after periodic storms and rain-bearing depressions fill

the lagoon and claypans. At such times there would be considerable movement of waders and waterfowl seeking food between Lindsay Gordon Lagoon and the lake systems on Yelma Station (to the south), Earraheedy (to the north) and Lake Carnegie and Lake Wells (to the east). In March 2003 there was an abundance of shield shrimps (*Triops australiensis*) in the shallow waters of Pink Claypan near Site 22, and a plentiful supply of clam shrimps (*Cyzicus* sp) in Lindsay Gordon Lagoon. In September 2003 Lindsay Gordon Lagoon appeared to have a good supply of algae and aquatic food sources.

Species that may turn up in the future, especially after good seasons are Australian Shoveler (10 on Earraheedy 15 March 2003, Coate *et al.*), Darter, Little Pied Cormorant, Little Black Cormorant, Australian Pelican, Rufous Night Heron, Straw-necked Ibis, Yellow-billed Spoonbill, (3, one in breeding plumage on Earraheedy 15 March 2003, Coate *et al.*), Black Kite, Grey Falcon, Black Falcon, Common Sandpiper, Inland Dotterel, Night Parrot, Sacred Kingfisher, Rufous Fieldwren, Banded Whiteface, Grey Honeyeater, Jacky Winter, Chiming Wedgebill and Spinifex-bird.

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